



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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Riverside Receives American Heart Association's Platinum Fit-Friendly Award

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside received the American Heart Association's (AHA) 2013 Platinum Fit-Friendly Award for promoting a Health and Wellness culture amongst employees and implementing efforts to become a Fit-Friendly organization.

On August 13, 2013, Mayor Pro-Tem Mike Gardner, on behalf of the City, received the award presented by Monique Stensrud, Heart Walk Director. "I was pleased to accept this award on behalf of the City of Riverside because it recognizes all the work that has been done within the City family to promote good health not just among City employees, but among all Riverside residents," Mayor Pro Tem Gardner said. The Platinum level recognition is presented to companies and organizations that offer employees: physical activity support, increased healthy eating options at work, a wellness at work culture and implementation or access to programs that provide physical, nutrition and cultural activities. In addition, Platinum award recipients must demonstrate at least one behavior change, one cost savings outcome or a positive return on investment.

Riverside's Human Resources Department is responsible for development and coordination of the popular wellness programs. Rhonda Strout, Human Resources Director noted that "there has been continued enthusiasm since inception of the program in 2009. Employees are actively engaged in a variety of competitive activities focused on getting healthier together including an annual weight loss "Get Fit Challenge" program where employees have lost 6,126.5 pounds in the last three years, and a brand new "Step Up Your Health" Stairwell program where employees walked approximately 12,000 flights of stairs during the month of July. Employees are making over-all lifestyle changes that have provided measurable results including reduced absenteeism and a reduction in health care costs. We are very pleased with the level of employee participation and results."

As a Fit-Friendly organization, the City of Riverside will receive recognition on the AHA website. Also, Riverside will receive recognition throughout the Inland Empire at local AHA events and in AHA communications supporting recognition programs. Lastly, Riverside will have the right to use the AHA's Fit-Friendly companies Platinum seals on all internal and external communications to positively market the City as a Fit-Friendly employer.

“Riverside takes fitness seriously, and City Hall is committed to encouraging a Fit, Fresh and Fun approach to living,” Mayor Rusty Bailey said. “This much-deserved recognition shows that approach is bearing fruit.”

The City of Riverside is proud to be amongst the top five (5) Fit-Friendly companies in the Inland Empire that received the Platinum award. This award and recognition is well received as the City continues to expand and promote its Employee Wellness Program.

For more information on Riverside’s award winning Wellness program, visit www.riversideca.gov/human/wellness

